



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION SAFETY BOARD
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20591

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OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

November 30, 1970

Honorable John H. Shaffer
Administrator
Federal Aviation Administration
Washington, D. C. 20590

Dear Mr. Shaffer:

A nonfatal midair collision on January 23, 1970, at Riverside Airport, Tulsa, Oklahoma, has brought to light a situation which is worthy of your consideration.

Our investigation disclosed that the Riverside Airport and its facilities are used extensively for local flying training. This training is conducted by several authorized organizations in the Tulsa area. However, there are no formal letters of agreement or other documents of a regulatory nature to coordinate the training activities with the activities of the Riverside control tower. There is no designated local training area, and no pictorial display of traffic pattern procedures for the guidance of student trainees.

Section 307(c) of the Federal Aviation Act of 1958 gives the Administrator the authority and responsibility to establish procedures for safe and efficient air traffic operations. Additionally, FAA Order 7110.14 (Airport Traffic and Taxi Patterns), dated January 10, 1968, delegates to the Regional Directors the responsibility for the implementation of Section 307(c) as it applies to local airport operations. As a result of our investigation of the accident at Riverside Airport, the Board has concluded that FAA Order 7110.14 is not accomplishing satisfactory implementation of Section 307(c) of the Act.

It is noted that Chapter 3 of the Airports Planning Handbook 5090.1 contains the guidelines for the FAA system of airport inspections. These guidelines appear to have been promulgated primarily to facilitate compliance with Section 311 of the Federal Aviation Act of 1958, which authorizes the Administrator to collect, maintain, and disseminate

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current information pertaining to the Nation's airports. There have been numerous changes to Chapter 3 of Handbook 5090.1 since its original date of publication. However, the guidelines continue to be oriented toward airport data collection, maintenance, and dissemination.

The recently enacted Airport and Airway Development Act of 1970 is concerned primarily with airport surface layout and ground operational developments. Additionally, it outlines the airport certification program which pertains only to those airports serving air carriers which are certified by the Civil Aeronautics Board. Consequently, the airport certification program would not be applicable to those airports serving only general aviation aircraft.

An inspection system should ferret out deficient operating practices before they are highlighted by an accident or incident, and should also accomplish the intent and purpose of Section 307(c) of the Federal Aviation Act of 1958. The Airports Planning Handbook 5090.1, Chapter 3, does not provide adequately for the peculiar needs of general aviation airports.

In the interest of safety, the Board recommends that:

The FAA reassess its system of airport inspections with a view toward the formulation of a system which can be applied to the broad range of operational needs of the airport, as described in this letter.

In accordance with established procedures, this letter will be placed in our public docket at the end of the five working-day period commencing the day after the date of this letter. It is understood, therefore, that there will be no public dissemination of this letter until that time.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "John H. Reed", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

John H. Reed
Chairman